

35. TERMITE REMOVAL FROM NEST MATERIAL AND REPAIR OF DAMAGED NEST  
BY WHITE-RUMPED MUNIA *LONCHURA STRIATA*

This refers to the note "Termite attack on nest material leading to desertion of eggs by birds" by K.V. Srinivas and S. Subramanya (*JBNHS* 97(1): 145).

I have seen in Mangalore (during 1996-1999), usually old nests of spotted dove (*Streptopelia chinensis*), jungle babbler (*Turdoides striatus*) and white-rumped munia (*Lonchura striata*) being attacked partially or fully by termites after the birds have left the nest. The nests were built on small trees at a height of c. 1-3 m. During the late- and post-monsoon period, when the tree bark and nest materials dry up, termites from the ground reach the nest via the tree bark, which they cover with mud while tunnelling.

I also saw, on several occasions, live nests of white-rumped munia (built in thick bushes of

*Piper nigrum* and its supporting tree *Erythrina* sp.), partially attacked by termites. Interestingly, the white-rumped munia feasted on the termites, a protein rich diet, in the nest material and nearby regions. Moreover, they repaired the damaged nest (as termites continue to attack the nest during night time and may damage part of the nest by early morning). The birds brought fresh nest material and successfully raised their offspring.

Oct. 16, 2000 R. SHYAMA PRASAD RAO  
Centre for Ecological Sciences,  
Indian Institute of Science,  
Bangalore 560 012, Karnataka, India.  
Email:shyam@ces.iisc.ernet.in  
sprasad101@hotmail.com

36. BIRDS OF GOA — SOME SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

Further to 'Birds of Goa' by Heinz Lainer (*JBNHS* 96(2): 203-220; 96(3): 405-423), I had conducted a brief survey of the birds at three wildlife sanctuaries (Cotigao, Bondla and Bhagwan Mahaveer) between November 29 and December 9, 1995, as part of a survey of the great black woodpecker. These comments are based on the observations made then.

**Besra sparrowhawk *Accipiter virgatus***

2 seen in Cotigao Wildlife Sanctuary (CWS); 1 seen in eucalyptus plantation, attacking smaller birds. All the earlier reports of this species are from Bhagwan Mahaveer Wildlife Sanctuary (BMWS).

**Marsh sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis***

1 seen at BMWS (Tambdi Surla area) on December 7. Reported as winter visitor in small numbers in the coastal belt.

**Nilgiri wood-pigeon *Columba elphinstonii***

2 birds at CWS on November 30. Considered a scarce, erratic visitor.

**Brainfever bird *Hierococcyx varius***

1 seen at CWS and 1 at Bondla Wildlife Sanctuary (BWS). Said to be usually present from mid-March to early November.

**Drongo cuckoo *Surniculus lugubris***

1 seen in a mixed hunting party in CWS. Earlier recorded as an uncommon monsoon visitor — from late May to early October.

**Small green-billed malkoha**

***Phaenicophaeus viridirostris***

A pair and a single bird seen at CWS. Said to avoid the Western Ghats strip.

**Eurasian scops-owl *Otus scops***

4-5 birds heard calling at BWS. This bird has not been listed by Lainer (op.cit.).

**Long-tailed nightjar *Caprimulgus macrurus***

1 heard at BWS. No recent records after the late 1970s.